

Instructions  
FOR  
MASTERS,  
TRADERS,  
Laborers, &c.



Printed in the Year 1699.



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# Instructions

## FOR

### Masters, Traders, Laborers, &c.

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#### S E C T. I.

*Masters are to be Moderate in their Commands.*

Q. **A**RE there not Duties, which God lays upon Masters, in regard of their Servants?

A. Every State has particular Duties belonging to it, and none can be a Good Christian, who is not careful in enquiring into and satisfying them.

Q. What are the Duties in particular belonging to Masters and Mistresses, in relation to their Servants?

A 2

A. They

#### 4 *Instructions for Masters,*

A. They are several : First, in the Exercise of their Authority in Commanding: They are to command nothing that is Sinful: For Masters, in their Families, being the Vice-gerents of God, they ought to Order nothing contrary to the Commands of God, by whose Authority they act. And if they give Orders contrary to this their Commission, they are not only to answer for their own Sin, but likewise for the Sins of their Servants, complying with such their undue Orders.

Again, they ought not to hinder their Servants from doing what God requires of them. And since God has given Command to Servants, as well as to all other Christians, to Worship him, to seek the *Kingdom of God*, and to work out their *Salvation*, Masters are not to hinder their Servants from complying with these Duties, which God exacts from them; neither directly, by forbidding them, nor indirectly, by oppressing them with so much Business, as to allow them no opportunity for satisfying the Commands of God. For this is to incur the guilt of *Pharaoh's Sin*, who, when God had commanded the Children of *Israel* to go and offer Sacrifice to him in the Desert, doubled their Tasks, and by new Burthens confin'd them at home.

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Secondly, Where God's Service is not particularly concern'd, there ought yet to be Moderation in all Commands, so as not to burthen Servants with more Work, than they are well able to do. For tho' it be a great Fault, to let Servants live without Business, so to betray them to all the Mischiefs of Idleness; yet to be unconcern'd at the Hardships put upon Servants, and not to value what they suffer, is a great Fault too, not only in the want of Compassion, but of Charity; which being the love of our Neighbor as of our selves, cannot allow of this Cruelty, of laying on Burthens, without any Consideration for those, who are to bear them.

I cannot tell, but it may look Great, to Command without Compassion; and I know a Worldly and Covetous Spirit thinks nothing too much for Servants, when it carries with it the prospect of Interest. But however it may look, it is certain there is no Greatness in it, but that of *Pharaoh*; for there can be no Generosity, where there is so much Cruelty; there is none but a slavish Spirit is fit to make Slaves. And as for the Covetous and Worldly Temper, 'tis so Mean and Base in it self, that there needs no more to mark the Oppression of Servants

## 6 *Instructions for Masters,*

with Infamy, than to see it the Fruit of that Contemprible Spirit.

The Rule therefore ought to be between both Extremes, so as to keep Servants employ'd, for their own sakes, as well as their Masters, and yet still with that Moderation, as to consider what is necessary for their Health and Rest, and not to think, that because their Misfortunes make them serve, they therefore have no Sense or Feeling. This Compassion is one Ingredient of the Good Christian ; and where-ever 'tis excluded, either by Passion, Imperiousness, Covetousness, or Immoderate Niceness, there is the Resemblance of an Ill Compound, which has Gall thrown in instead of Honey.

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### S E C T. II.

*They are to be Moderate in the way of Commanding and Re-proving.*

**A**S there is to be Moderation in Commands, so likewise in the way of Commanding; for tho' Servants are subject,

*Traders, Laborers, &c.* 5

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A like Moderation is to be us'd in finding Fault, and Reproving; because Reproof ought to be ever Just and Reasonable, and it cannot be so, but by bearing proportion with the Fault; now these being very different; as some being the Effect of Carelessness, some of Sloth, some of Mistake, some of Oversight, enquiry ought to be first made, before Reproof be given, for otherwise it may do more harm than good, by creating an ill Opinion of their Injustice, who give it.

First then, It cannot be allow'd, to find fault with every thing a Servant does; for, besides it being the certain way to keep Servants in an ill Humor, there is nothing can more discourage them from being

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being Industrious, than when, notwithstanding the best of their Care, they are sure to be blam'd. This Nice, Exceptionous Temper, that is never to be pleas'd, may easily spoil, but will never make a Good Servant. But it punishes it self in its own uneasiness, by many Changes bringing sometimes such Servants into the House, whose Crimes shew them the unreasonableness of their Impatience, in not bearing with ordinary Failings.

Secondly, They ought not with Passion declaim against such Faults, which are no more than Oversights, or the Effect of some Accident; because it is not Just; and with those of a Good Temper, it is very unreasonable, since the very Accident it self is Grief enough, without the addition of a Master's Passionate Resentments, which only serve to change the Grief into Confusion, and instead of making a Servant more careful, puts him beyond himself, and makes him not know what he does.

But, Thirdly, If Servants are faulty thro' Neglect or Carelessness, I except not against Reproof, but approve it as necessary; and think those Masters are very much to be condemn'd, who passing by such Faults in silence, give their Servants

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But then the Reproof ought to be suited to the Person and the Fault: Some are to be treated with sharpness, such whose Dull or Heedless Temper has no Life, but from the Spur: And others will be prejudiced by this Severity. In all Cases Reproof is to be reasonable, and therefore as free from Passion, as may be, because this seeing nothing right, is not qualified either for being Judge, or doing Justice. For which reason *S. Paul* cautions Masters against it, advising them to forbear threatening, and putting them in mind, that they also have a Master in Heaven, with whom there is no respect of Persons, *Ephes. 6. 9.* Where he dissuades not Masters from giving just Reproof, but puts them in mind of considering, how they do it; because they likewise are Servants of a Master in Heaven, who will call them to an Account, for whatever they do against their Servants unreasonably, and in Passion.

## S E C T. III.

*They are to be Careful of their  
Servants in Health and Sick-  
ness.*

**B**ESIDES Commanding and Reproving, Masters have still another Duty to their Servants, in the Care of them, seeing that nothing be wanting necessary for Life and Health : For since Servants spend their Lives, and often hazard their Health in their Master's Service, both ought to have part in the Master's Care. And therefore, as those are much to be commended for their Tenderneſs and Charity, who are not only Sollicitous for their Children, but likewise for their Servants, in seeing they are provided with all that is fitting, both as to Diet and Lodging, and sparing them in all, that may prejudice their Health ; and then expreſſing a more particular Concern, when Indisposition or Sickneſs demands it : So thoſe Maſters are as much to be Cenſur'd, who being immoderately Nice in whatever belongs to themſelves, make their Servants no part of their Care ; but oppreſſing them with unreaſonable Labor,

## Traders, Laborers, &c. 9

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## Traders, Laborers, &c. II

bor, let them want Necessaries, and exposing their Health upon every Humor, either let them lye Comfortless, when they are Sick, or turn them out of Doors; which is to treat them with much less Care, than their Horses or Dogs.

This is very unlike the Spirit of the Centurion, mention'd in the Gospel, who when his Servant was Sick, sent some Principal Men of the *Jews* to petition Christ in his behalf; and this Solitude of a Heathen is a Reproach to such Christians, who think it beneath them, to have a Concern for their Servants, and shew their Greatness in being Uncharitable, even where Charity is so much due, as to be within one degree of Justice, if it be not wholly so.

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## S E C T. IV.

*They are to see, that their Servants do their Duty to God.*

**T**His Care of Masters ought to be farther extended, even to the Care of their Servants Souls; so far at least, as to see, they perform their Duty to God, in doing

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doing Good, and avoiding Evil, as far as falls within Family-Disciplin.

First then, They are to examin, whether they say their Prayers, and are present at the Public Worship of God. The Ignorance or Careless Temper of too many Servants, is proof enough of the Necessity of this Inspection and Concern in Masters, and the Omission of this Enquiry, is enough to draw upon them the guilt of their Servants Neglects.

Secondly, They are to see, they have time to perform these Duties; and therefore are to take Care, they be not so oppress'd with Business, as to have no opportunity or leisure for the Service of God. Excess of Business may be sometimes a real hindrance, and if it be generally so, there is a necessity of considering, how it may be moderated. Necessary Works cannot be omitted; but how many things are there in a Family, which are the Commands only of Pride, Excess, Humor or Niceness? And is it not more reasonable in a Christian, that some of these at least should be retrench'd, than that Servants, for giving attendance to them, should be oblig'd to live as Heathens? If the thing be consider'd, Faith can have there no Influence, where the Decision is not in favor of Servants, for allowing

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allowing them so much time at least, that they may not be forced to renounce the Practice of Christianity, in Compliance with the Weakness or Vice of those whom they serve.

This enquiry again ought to be made, because many make Excessive Business their Excuse for not Praying, and performing other Spiritual Duties, when in reality 'tis nothing better than Neglect; and Sloth is at the Root of all their Omissions. For which Reason, Masters ought to Examine their Servants, that so they may confound the Slothful with their Neglect, and help to Contrive for those of better Inclinations, who have a Good Will, but for want of Management cannot find Time to Pray.

Thirdly, This enquiry ought to be made with a stricter Eye, as to *Sundays* and Holy-days, to see, if they take care to Sanctifie them, according to their Institution. The great Liberty in Prophaning these Days, or at least, in passing them over, without any Concern for answering the purposes, for which they were ordain'd, ought to press Christian Masters to call their Servants to an Account. And a Principal care ought to be, on their own parts, to

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see, that by unnecessary Business they be not hinder'd in the Duties of those Days : Nay more, they ought to Contrive things so, and exact so little Service from them, that having their time at Command, the Masters may be in no danger, of their Servants Neglects being charg'd upon them.

Hence it cannot but be advisable, on these Days, to dispence with that Niceness which on other Days may be exacted, in Cleaning of Rooms. Dinner may be so order'd, as to excuse a great part of their usual Drudgery in preparing it, and of the Attendance in waiting unseasonably at Table. Visits may be excluded till a fitting time, and going abroad, with Retinue, put off, till the Duty of the Day be over. By this and other like Management, those who have the Care of Families may shew the best kind of Compassion to their Servants, in giving them great Opportunities for Saving their Souls, and taking all Excuses out of their Hands.

But since no part of the Duty of these Days can be well perform'd without due Instruction in the Christian Doctrine, hence are Masters to see, that their Servants have all necessary Convenience for

for being Taught what they are oblig'd to know. Many are so unhappy, either in their Education, or the Dulness of their Temper, that 'tis not a little help, will serve for their Instruction; this Circumstance is therefore to be well consider'd, and Provision must be made for every one according to their Wants: If some Service be excus'd for Accomplishing this so necessary Work, the Masters will be no losers in the End; since, besides the Reward they will have from God for this Charity, they may Hope to be better serv'd; there being nothing that can better fit Servants for being every way Faithful to their Masters, than the due Knowledge of their Duties to God. The want of this Knowledge being a general Occasion of their failing in many Obligations, which belong to their State, and running into Disorders.

## S E C T. V.

*They are to reprove whatever they observe in them displeasing to God.*

**T**HIS Care again of Masters ought to have another Branch, and that is, in Reproving whatever they observe in their Servants displeasing to God. Hence they are not to Tolerate in them any ill Custom, as of Swearing, Lying, Drinking, &c. but upon the Knowledge of any such Disorder, to labor for its Reformation; and if upon sufficient Trial, there be no Amendment, to remove those that give the Scandal; that so, Vice may have its due Discouragement, and their Corruption may not be Communicated to those of the Family, who are as yet Innocent.

Those Heads of Families, who are presently exasperated upon the Ordinary Neglects of Servants in the Business of their Place, and yet know them to live in the daily Transgression of God's Commands, without any Concern for Correcting their Disorders, give Demonstration of their own unhappy State,

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in being so Solicitous for the things of this World, and having so little Zeal for the next. And tho' this may not touch them at present, yet the effect of this Indifferency will fall Heavy at last, when they shall be call'd to an Account for all the Sins of their Servants, which have been encourag'd by their Silence, and grown up under the favor of their Connivance.

Those then, who will escape the weight of this Charge, must with a watchful Eye inspect all the Ways of their Servants, as to the Method of their Conversation at home, and all the Circumstances of their going abroad, both as to the Places and Company they frequent, and the Hours of their going out and returning home. Without this care, how shall Masters be able to give an Account of their Servants? And what will the Disciplin of a Family be, when Youth are left to the Liberty of their own Inclinations, without the Apprehension of any to question or controul them?

Whence I cannot but think those Masters much to Blame, whose Servants being early discharg'd every Evening from their Business and Attendance, have some Hours left to

their own Discretion, without being call'd to any Account of their Management. For those, who Reflect on the Corruption of our Age, and the little Confidence, that can be had in unexperienc'd Years, must see, that this is nothing less, than putting into the Hands of Youth daily Opportunities of ruining themselves: And such Numerous Instances there are of this Liberty abus'd, to the Irrecoverable loss of Youth, that 'tis a subject deserves Tears; especially when we consider the sad Disappointment of Parents, who after a Pious Education, having placed out their Children, and being satisfied in the Provision they have made for their Livelihood, find them afterwards lost to all that is Good, by the Neglect of their Masters, and the unreasonable Liberties they have given them.

The Consequence of this Sin, both in the Affliction of Parents, and in the Ruin of Youth, brings so heavy a Charge after it, that I cannot see, how Masters will be able to answer it; since 'tis seldom in their Power to make any Reparation for the Mischiefs they do by such Neglects; which have still a greater Aggravation of guilt, if observing the Disorders of their Clerks or  
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Apprentices, they purposely let them go on, that so, when out of their Time, there may be no probability of their taking Clients or Customers out of their Hands; for this has such a Complication of Injustice in it, that it would be a Reproach even in a Heathen, and therefore not to be reconcil'd with the Principles of the Christian Profession. All Heads of Families then, who have Thoughts of providing for another World, must be watchful, that all those under their Care, be a daily part of their Care, in advising and reprovng, and cutting off, as much as may be, all the Opportunities, by which the Indiscretion of Youth is industrious in drawing Mischief on it self: For without this Care, they cannot satisfy the Obligations they have undertaken, either to God or Man.

## S E C T. VI.

*They ought to give them good Example, and be Just in paying their Wages.*

**O**N E Principal part of this Care must be in giving Good Example to their Servants; for without this the best Advice cannot be expected to be very successful: As to all Family-duties therefore, those, who are the Heads, ought to be most Regular, as in Prayer and keeping good Hours, &c. For since nothing can go on well in any Family, where Disciplin is not observ'd, this must be a daily part of the Master's Concern, to see, that good Order be kept, and not only, that it be kept by others, but that he be Punctual, as far as Business will permit, in leading the way. For if he, by any Habitual Disorder, gives ill Example, it must needs make his Advice Ridiculous, and it cannot but be fear'd, but where there is so much Ignorance and Weakness, it will soon have Followers, notwithstanding all the Care, that can be us'd

us'd by others, for Authority is more prevalent in Evil, than in Good; and therefore to think, that a Family should be Regular, and the Master only Disorderly, is a Thought without Experience, and can give no more than groundless Hopes.

I conclude now these Duties of Masters with that of being Just to their Servants, in the due Payment of their Wages, and of complying with whatever other Conditions were agreed upon at their Enterance; for tho' they were made only with Servants, yet Justice ought to be as strictly observ'd with them, as with others, who have both Power and Money to make good their Right. God requires this at the Hands of Masters, and 'tis with the Addition of such Threats to such as fail in it, that if from them the guilt be Measur'd, the Consequence of no other Sin can more justly be Apprehended, than of this Oppression, which Cries to Heaven for Vengeance.

These Rules may serve for Masters, as far as concerns their Servants; but there being still many other Difficulties, which these do not reach to, belonging to their State, if they are engag'd in any kind of Traffic or Trade, there-

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fore I must carry on these Instructions  
farther, so as to give some Light in  
this way also, which a Universal Cor-  
ruption has cover'd with such great  
Darkness, that the Path of Truth and  
Justice is scarce to be discern'd by those  
few, who are willing to walk in it.

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## Instructions for Traders.

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### S E C T. I.

*The Danger of their Profession,  
and General Rule for avoid-  
ing it.*

**T**RADING is in it self lawful, but  
the eagerness of Gain and Co-  
vetousness has mixt it with so  
many Injustices, that what of it self is  
irreprovable, is very dangerous in Pra-  
ctice. This Profession was so general-  
ly Corrupt in *S. Chrysostom's* time, that  
he sets down this as a Conclusion;  
*That a Man of Traffic cannot please God,*  
*and therefore no Christian ought to be of*  
*this*

*this Profession* : I wish it were mended since his time, so as not to deserve this Censure ; but since the Improvement of our present Age, above that of his time, is in nothing more evident, than in the Art of using Frauds, and in the Ingenious Contrivances for Cozening one another, I fear there is no reason to expect the Censure to be moderated. But the Evil of Trading being not in the Profession, but in the Abuses of it, I come to those Rules, which may serve for some help in avoiding them.

For a General Rule, I set down this Principle ; That no Christian ought to do an Injustice to his Neighbor. This is more particularly applied by *S. Paul* to Buyers and Sellers, *1 Thes. 4.* where, after this Preamble, *Ver. 2.* *You know, what Commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus :* He instances several of these Commandments, and then adds this belonging to our present purpose, *Ver. 6.* *That no Man go beyond and defraud (or, as in the Margin, over-reach) his Brother in any Matter ; because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such, as we also have forewarn'd you, and testified.* It is one Commandment then of *Jesus Christ*, deliver'd and publish'd by *S. Paul* to all the Professors of the Gospel ; That

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*no Man defraud or over-reach another in any Business.* And I wish it were writ in great Characters in every Shop and Place of Trade, that it might be a Rule to all that are concern'd, that, whatever their desire of Gain be, they may be discourag'd from seeking it, by over-reaching or defrauding their Neighbor, of which God has declar'd, that he will be the Avenger.

This then is the Rule, Plain and Positive ; by it are to be examin'd the General Methods of Traders, whether in Buying and Selling ; and in whatever Case there is any thing of Defrauding or Over-reaching, it must, of Course be condemn'd, as contrary to the Commands of Christ , as what the Gospel will not allow, and God will revenge.

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### S E C T. II.

*Frauds and Injustice in the Goods they Sell.*

**I**N regard of the thing that is Sold, there may be Fraud and Over-reaching many ways ; as, First, If that which  
is



is Damag'd or Imperfect, be Sold for Good in its kind, for Sound and Perfect. For thus the Buyer is over-reach'd, in having that put into his Hands for Good, which is not Good; and if he pays the Price of Good, he is defrauded, since he pays for what he has not.

I do not here except against the Arts of setting off Goods, where the design is no more, than to encourage Customers to give a Just and Lawful Price for them, according to their true Value. But if these Arts are made use of to deceive Customers, in making those Goods pass for Good, which are not so, and for bringing in a Price above their real Value; then all such Arts, as far as they serve for this End, must be condemn'd as Unlawful, since their whole design is to over-reach and defraud the Buyer, which is expressly forbid.

Secondly, There may be Fraud and Over-reaching, as to the thing Sold, if the Buyer declaring the End and Use of the Goods he asks for, the Seller puts such Goods into his Hands, which are altogether unfit for that use, for which they are bought.

Thirdly, If a Person Sells, that, which is not his own: For here, besides

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sides the Injustice done the right Owner, he that Buys it is wrong'd, by paying a Price for that, which, when pay'd for, is not his own, but must be restor'd, and may be seiz'd by the Owner, if ever it comes to his Knowledge.

Fourthly, If a Person Sells that, which may be Prejudicial to the Buyer; as in Apothecaries making up their Bills with Drugs, that are either perish'd, or, at least, do not answer the Intention of the Physician: For thus the Physician is impos'd on, and the Patient wrong'd both in Money, Health and Life.

Fifthly, If a Person Sells that, which cannot be Sold; as in taking Money for that which is Spiritual, or annex'd to Spiritual, for this is Simony.

Sixthly, If a Person Sells that, which ought not to be Sold, as being in it self Sinful, or immediately tending to Sin; such are all sorts of Immodest Pictures, Books, Songs, &c. as likewise all Books of Irreligion and Profaneness, and of such Errors, as are evidently contrary to the Truth of the Gospel. For tho' there be no wrong done to the Buyer, as to the Price of such Goods, yet there is an Injustice, in thus helping to betray the Cause of God, and directly

directly Contributing to the Propagation of Sin, That Christians should do this for Gain, is an Action so unworthy of what they profess, that I cannot see, but that keeping on such a Trade, is joining with *Judas*, in betraying Christ, in Selling the Gospel and their Souls; and what will be the Fruit of such Gain, but the loss of all?

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S E C T. III.

*In the Price.*

**T**Here may be Fraud and Injustice in the Price of what is Sold, by exacting an unreasonable Rate. There is a Gain allow'd to all that Trade, but this Gain has its bounds; and tho' these cannot be so fixt in Particular, as to condemn all Excess of Oppression; yet there is no one, who Trades, but from that Common Light of Reason and Justice, which God gives to every Soul, may easily discover, when he acts against that, which is Reasonable and Just. They all know the true Value of their Goods; they know the Circum-

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Circumstances, which raise or lessen their Value; they know the Rates, at which they are generally Sold, and their own Conscience bears Testimony against them, when making an Advantage of the Buyer, they take of him a Price exceeding both the Value and Common Rates of such Goods.

Such is the Injustice, when a Person coming to Buy, who neither knows the Price of the Goods, nor when they are Good in their kind, has either Faulty Goods put upon him, or such a Price exacted from him, as far exceeds their Value. For this is evidently over-reaching him, by taking an Advantage of his Ignorance.

*Q. This is the Buyer's fault, in undertaking what he does not understand. Caveat Emptor; 'Tis the Buyer's part, to take Care he be not impos'd on.*

*A. 'Tis an oversight indeed for a Man, when he is amongst Pick-pockets, not to take Care of his Purse: And would you have every Man, that goes into a Shop, think this to be his Case? If he ought to think so, then the Fault of an Ignorant Chapman, is in believing Shopkeepers to be Honester than they are. And so in reality it is, if they stand ready in their Shops to over-reach*  
all

all they can, and then only do it not, when a Customer's Skill and Caution will not give them Opportunity for it.

Truly if this be all the Honesty of Shopkeepers, 'tis like that of Robbers, who quietly pass by those, who seem too well arm'd against them : But how far is this from the Justice requir'd of them by *S. Paul*, who exprelly gives them Command, Not to over-reach or defraud any ? If their Duty then be to over-reach none, and this Principle of Justice ought so to possess their Souls, as to give them a Horror of all Frauds, and to Tie up their Hands from all Deceit ; and God demands this at their Hands ; how wretched must be the State of their Souls, who, as if there were no such Command, defraud all they can, and spare only those, who will not be deceiv'd by them ?

If this be the Method of Traders, then 'tis true now, that such Traders cannot please God, and that no Christian can be such a Trader, because God's Will and Commands are no Barr upon their Conscience, but they give themselves up to their Covetous Desires, contrary to all the Principles of Truth and Justice.

But this is not the only Injustice in  
taking

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taking the Advantage of a Buyer's want of Experience or Skill; 'tis much the same of any other Advantage, that is taken, for raising the Price above what is just; as in Case of some present Distress or Necessity observ'd in the Buyer; for whoever, upon discovering such Necessity, exacts more than is due, is Guilty of Oppression and Extortion, and overthrows, in this, all the Principles of the Gospel, by being then Barbarous and Cruel, when Circumstances oblige to Charity, Tenderness and Compassion; and therefore there can be no less than Infinite Woes pronounc'd against those, who upon this Consideration, exact upon the Poor, or such, who by unhappy Circumstances are brought into Streights, and God will be the Revenger of such Iniquity.

'Tis not much Inferior to this, if a Person being earnestly bent on a thing, resolves to have it on any Terms; and this being observ'd, the Seller raises it to an Extravagant Price: For tho' here he has the Opportunity of a good Market; yet since the Phancy of the Buyer adds nothing to the real Value of his Goods, he has no other Motive for setting them so high, but only the fair Opportunity of making a Prey: And  
what

what does this betray in him, but the Disposition of those above-mention'd, who are ready to catch at all Advantages, and stand waiting for those, who are fit to be deceiv'd?

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## S E C T. IV.

### *In the Seller.*

**T** Here may be Injustice in the Seller, if by Lying he endeavors to persuade his Customers, that his Goods are Sound and Perfect, when they are not so; or that their Value is much above what they deserve. This is more Criminal, if he adds Oaths and Imprecations to gain Credit to his Lies; for then there is a double Iniquity; in the Injustice of his Price, and in his Perjury, by which he prevails on the Customer to give it.

Lies have not that notorious Guilt, when they are only Perswasives to a Just Price; nay, the Hardness and Unbelief of Customers is such, that they seem almost necessary for those, who think to Sell. But however, this is not enough to justify the Practice; for  
since

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since Lies are expressly forbid by God, they must be judg'd unlawful, by as many as believe in him, and make his Will the Rule of their Conscience, and therefore are not to pass for Innocent, even when they are to perswade a Customer to give a Just Price.

I must confess, the Hardness of Customers is a great Temptation, and the fear of losing Trade pushes it on. And is not this a strange Character of a Christian World, that believing Truth and Justice to be the Way to the Eternal Truth, there is scarce such a thing to be found amongst them, as a Confidence of any being True and Just; but in all Business there is as general a Distrust, as if there were no Faith amongst them? The Hardness of Customers makes Shopkeepers Swear and Lie; and therefore are Customers Hard, because they know Shopkeepers will Swear and Lie. Both have something to Mend, and I think, those, who keep Shop may safely begin, without danger of being much Losers by it. For I cannot but believe, that if a Person were so exact to Truth, that those who come to Buy, could have a Confidence in him, that he would neither demand an unreasonable Price, nor put off things



things for Good, which are not so, this would encrease the Number of Customers, and by Moderate Gain come to equal their Heaps, who use all unwarrantable Means for imposing on those, who come to Buy : And in case it should not, yet there would be the Comfort of a Good Conscience, which with the Hopes of God's Blessing, would make abundant Recompence for whatever Advantage their Neighbors have over them, and is the Fruit of their Injustice.

Another Injustice may be in the Seller, if he makes use of False Weights or Measures ; for this is nothing less than Cheating ; and as God has declar'd this to be an Abomination to him, so those, who make this their Gain, provoke God's Wrath against them, and must look from him the Punishment of all the Injustice they have done their Neighbor.

Here must have place the Monopolies and Compacts of Traders, who by these undue Ways make a Scarcity when there is none, and by either keeping or getting all into their own Hands, oblige those that will Buy, to come to whatever Extravagant Rates they are pleas'd to set upon their Goods. This cannot

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cannot be allow'd in any Trade, because there is Oppression in it ; but 'tis most Criminal, when the Monopoly is in things necessary for Life, as in Corn, Meat, &c. for this is bringing Calamity on the Public, and Starving the Poor : 'Tis that, which provokes the Curses of the People, at 'tis said in the Proverbs, and if *S. Chrysostom's* Judgment be taken, he is absolutely Accursed, who contrives to the making Corn Dear.

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S E C T. V.

*In the Buyer, and of Stolen Goods.*

**O**N the Part of the Buyer there may be likewise Injustice : First, If he that undertakes to Sell, knowing not the true Value of what he Offers to Sale, the Buyer takes this Advantage, and gives much below the real Value. For tho' Tradesmen are suppos'd to know the Price of their Goods, and there is no need of Scruple in the Case ; yet while Servants undertake to Sell, they may be easily over-seen ; as likewise many others may be, in the case of Offering to Sell what they do not

not well understand. And yet no Advantage ought to be made of such Ignorance or Over-sight ; because every one ought to do, as they would be done by ; and no Body would think it Fair-dealing , to be thus Treated by another, but would esteem it Deceit or Over-reaching.

Secondly, If a Person obliges a Shopkeeper to Sell for loss ; as in case he be in Debt, and having not ready Money, his Creditor will not take Goods in Payment, except it be at an unreasonable Under-rate : The Creditor being satisfied at the same time, that he should be no loser, if he took them at the Common Price. Likewise if a Person knowing a Shopkeeper to be in Distress for ready Money, presses him to Sell with loss.

Thirdly, If a Person pretends, he has no want of such Goods, knowing, that no Body else will Buy them, that so he may perswade the Seller to part with them with loss. Infinit other ways there are betwixt Buyer and Seller, in which, by Dissembling, Lying, and other Artifices, they impose on each other. But whatever they be, tho' Authoriz'd by Custom, and Universal in Practice, they must all be Censur'd  
and

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and Condemn'd by the Apostle's Rule, as far as they have any thing of Fraud or Over-reaching in them.

And that Custom must be here included, which is of Buying Stolen Goods. For this is an Injustice equal to Theft, if it be done with a Compact of taking off the Hands of Thieves, whatever they meet with belonging to their Trade. And it cannot be excus'd, if they only Buy, what is by accident Offer'd to be Sold at their Shop. The Reason is, First, Because such Goods are not theirs, who Offer them to Sale, and it is not Just to Buy of those, who cannot Sell. Secondly, Because by taking such Goods off their Hands, they encourage Thieves, by making their Theft an Advantage to them, and thus do Injury not only to Private Persons, but also to the Government, in helping to support Robbers, by making their Wickedness Serviceable to them. Thirdly, For their own sakes ; because, when they have paid for such Goods, they cannot be esteem'd their own, but theirs from whom they were Stolen ; and whatever Advantage they make in Selling such Goods again, it is not theirs, but of Right belongs to the Owners, from whom they were taken.

Q. But

*Q. But if Shopkeepers Buy such Goods with a good Conscience, without Suspicion of their being Stolen?*

*A.* There is something so particular in Thieves Offering Stolen Goods to Sale, both in the way of Offering them, and in the Under-rate, which they ask, that it is easily discern'd by such as are us'd to Trade: But if we must suppose your Case, I answer, that if Stolen Goods are bought without Suspicion of their being Stolen, there can be no Sin in such a purchase, because it was made with a Good Conscience, and without any appearance of Evil. However if afterwards there be Evidence of the Goods having been Stolen, the Purchaser, tho' he has paid for them, can make no Advantage of them, nor Sell them, but they are to be return'd to the Owner, who has the only Right to them.

*Q. Is not this hard, when he has paid for them, and bought them with a Good Conscience?*

*A.* It is his Misfortune to be thus impos'd on. He has been Cheated, and must be a loser by it, as he must be in all other Bargains, where the Goods do not answer his Expectation, but, upon Examination, prove Damag'd, Imperfect

or Counterfeit ; for as here, he must bear the loss, except he can recover something of him that made the Sale ; so in the Case propos'd, the Purchaser of Stolen Goods must stand to the loss, except he can find a way to make Recovery of him, that Sold them ; for the First Owner has all the Right to them ; his Title being still as Good as ever, notwithstanding the Theft and the Sale, that has been made of them. Thus the Law decrees, and 'tis founded on the truest Principles of Justice : Because no Man loses his Right by the Act of another, who has no Right for what he does. It would be the same in an Estate, which the Owner would not lose, tho' another should have paid the full Price of it, to one, who had no Right to Sell it.

*Q. But what if the Purchaser has Sold the Goods again, before he has any Knowledge of their having been Stolen ?*

*A. The Case is hard, but I must judge as the Law does, which making no Distinction betwixt the Goods, and the Price of the Goods, obliges in both Cases to Restitution. Thus, I think, Conscience obliges, since such a Person is in Possession of what is not his own upon a just Title ; and I know*

know of no Relief, but from the Person, to whom the Restitution is to be made, who being assur'd of his Buying and Selling such Goods with a good Conscience, without any Suspicion of their being Stolen, ought in Equity to consider him, and not let him bear the whole Loss. This, I know, the Law will not Encourage, because it takes no Cognizance of Conscience, but only of the Overt Act: But where Conscience is wholly consider'd, the Resolution must be different, and I see none more Equitable, than what I have here declar'd; for so, I think, Sincere and Just Persons would do on both sides. And hence, if there should be any, who, upon the Motive of Conscience, after having thus Bought and Sold Stolen Goods, should make their Address to the Party from whom they were Stolen, I think it would be Cruelty to take the Advantage, which the Law gives in such Case, and Refuse the Composition here prescrib'd; because Equity will not allow such Rigor, but requires Tenderneſs towards Persons of Tender Consciences.

These Directions may serve for Traders; but having prescrib'd Justice to be observ'd in the Manner of Dealing, I cannot Conclude without this

Fundamental Caution, that they consider the Lawfulness of the Trade they profess. The far greater part are so; but some are to be question'd, especially in the way, they are generally practis'd; such, I mean, which have Oppression of the Poor, and Extortion in them. Amongst these I reckon Pawnbrokers, and some Private Persons, who lend Money to such as are in Distress. There are many Reasons absolutely to except against them; but certainly, as the Common Practice is, of Doubling the Principal, or gaining Fifty or Eighty *per Cent.* they are so far from helping the Poor, as they pretend, that they Eat out their very Bowels, and Devour them; and therefore, in this way, must be Condemn'd of Oppression. And if they are any way to be justified, it must be, by bringing them to some Regulation, by having the whole Matter laid before those in Authority, and a Moderate Gain settled, upon a due Computation of their Expences, Hazards and Losses. If this were done, they might be Serviceable to the Public, and live by the Service they do to those, who want their Assistance; but without this, I do not see, how any, who pretend to Conscience, can live in the Profession and Practice of so Evident an Extortion.

S E C T.



S E C T. VI.

*In Workmen and Laborers.*

**H**AVING gone thus far with Traders, as to Buying and Selling, I must now speak to others, whose Profession is to serve their Neighbor, and take Money as the Reward of their Labor, whether of Mind or Body. And these are to keep to the same Standard-Rule with the former, of not over-reaching, defrauding, wronging, or doing any kind of Injustice to their Neighbor.

There is Injustice in these, if they exact more for their Labor, than what is due according to the Common Rate, which Custom and Practice have set upon it. But I speak not here of those, whose particular Art, as in Painting, Carving, &c. cannot be thus rated, but must be differently Valued, according to the Rarity of the Work.

Secondly, If they do not take due Pains, that the Work they have undertaken, be done according to Agreement: For if they either put not in good Materials or Ingredients, or slightly make up a Work, so as not to

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answer the Contract, it is evident, they over-reach their Neighbor, and take Money for what they have not done; since the Price of Slight Work is very different from that, which is more Substantial. In this are concern'd all sorts of Working Trades; and as it is a Principal Part of Honesty belonging to their Profession, to Finish their Work according to Agreement, both as to the Goodness of Materials, and due Care in making it up; so it is an evident Injustice to do otherwise, and no Generality of Practice will excuse the guilt any more, than the Number of Offenders does in other Sins.

Thirdly, If by neglecting to Finish their Work, according to Agreement, or in due time, they considerably injure those, who employ them. This may be in many Cases, and is most evident in what belongs to Plowing, Planting and Gardening, where Neglect proves the loss of the Season:

Fourthly, If the Materials or Ingredients are considerably prejudiced, and the Work damag'd by their neglecting to make it up in due time. This happens in many Compounds, and Extracts, &c. where the Goodness and Virtue depends often upon a Nicety.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, If they demand more Materials, than is necessary for the Work, and keep what remains for themselves. This is a Method of many Working Trades, but particularly of those, who make up Cloaths; but how to excuse it from Fraud, I cannot tell; since being paid for their Work, they have no Right to the least part of the Materials, that remain, and therefore cannot keep them, without his Knowledge and Permission to whom they belong, but by being Unjust to him. If any thing be due for Time spent in Buying for those, who set them to Work, this ought to be set down and consider'd by such as employ them; for Time is valuable to such as Work for Bread; but however, they ought not to be their own Pay masters, but deal fairly, and let those, who are to pay them, know what they pay for.

Lastly, If they do not Work the whole time, according to Contract. In this are principally concern'd Journey-men and Day-laborers, who make no Conscience of Neglecting their Business, and Idling away Hours, when they have no Overseer to oblige them to more exactness. This is a Point too easily pass'd over without examining

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by those, who are concern'd in it, and 'tis nothing but *not thinking* can give them any Peace of Conscience ; for certainly there is as much Injustice in this, as in Stealing, and for this they will be call'd to an Account.

The Reason of all these Points is, because whoever Labors by Compact, is Bound in Justice to comply with all the Conditions of the Compact, both as to Time and Manner of the Work ; and purposely, or by neglect to be wanting in any, cannot be done, but with Injustice, if it turns to the prejudice or loss of him, with whom the Contract was made.

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### S E C T. VII

*In Lawyers, Physicians, Surgeons.*

**T**HE same Judgment is to be made of those, who are of a more Liberal Profession, but undertake Business by a sort of Virtual Contract, and expect the Reward of their Industry or Labor ; such are All that belong to the Law, Physic, or Surgery.

First

First then, 'tis an Injustice in any of these mention'd, if they bring in Bills of Charges, and either set down what is unreasonable for what they have done, or add what they have never done.

Secondly, If they undertake the Defence of a Cause, that is evidently Unjust; or, for their own Gain, Encourage Persons to commence Litigious Suits, to the Prejudice of both Parties, or Ruin of either.

Thirdly, If they take no Pains to understand the Cause, in which they are to Plead. If they make Delays in bringing on a Cause to a Hearing. If they have been wanting either in duly Soliciting, or Drawing up Breves; if they have purposely put off a Cause. Infinit ways there are, by which Men of this Profession, put their Clients to unnecessary and repeated Charges, and at other times make them great Sufferers thro' their Neglect. Custom, and the Example of others, may lessen the Horror of this Sin; but certainly it is so great, that it cannot easily be equall'd, since in raising themselves upon their Neighbors Misfortunes, and encreasing their Unhappiness, that they may be Gainers by it, has so much of Hard-heartedness in it, so much Cruelty, and is so

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contrary

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contrary to the Spirit of Charity, that, I think, it cannot be practis'd, but by renouncing the Gospel, and all Right to Life Eternal.

The Case is much the same, when Physicians, Surgeons, &c. Neglect their Patients, or Prolong their Cure for their own greater Advantage; for this cannot be excus'd from Oppression and Cruelty; which is likewise their Crime, when for making their own Interest another way, they prescribe more Medicines, or more Chargeable, than the Case requires.

Fourthly, In all Professors of the Law, it is acting both against Law and Gospel, to take Fees of the Adverse Party to betray their Clients. The like Injustice may be in those, who sit on the Bench, if they take Bribes, if they are prevail'd on by Passion in favoring or opposing either Party, or if they take not due Care in discerning the Justice of the Cause before them.

Fifthly, There may be the same Injustice in the Jury, upon the same Heads; for if they give not due Attention to the Cause, if they accept Presents or Money, if they are over-ru'd by Passion or Party in the Verdict they bring in, they betray the Trust repos'd  
in

in them, and must answer to God for whatever wrong they do their Neighbor, whether in Life, Estate or Reputation. The same guilt falls on all those, who are concern'd in Empannelling the Jury; for if they do not nominate Persons of known Integrity, and such as they think most Indifferent to Both Parties; if they are Industrious in putting those on, whom they know indispos'd by Passion or Interest for doing Justice, or if they take Bribes for doing so, they are False to their Trust, and have all the Injustice to answer, which is the Consequence of whatever unjust Verdict is brought in.

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S E C T. VIII.

*In paying Wages or Hire.*

BESIDES the Heads already mention'd, there may be Injustice, as to the Wages to be paid to such as are Hir'd to Work. First, In absolutely refusing to pay what is thus due. Secondly, In unreasonably changing the Wages agreed upon, as *Jacob* complain'd of *Laban*. Thirdly, In unreasonable delays of paying what is due, by which  
such

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such as Work Hard, come to want the Bread they have Work'd for, are forced to run in Debt, and take up what is necessary for Life at the Highest Rates, and bring their Family into many Inconveniencies.

Fourthly, By oppressing Poor Workmen, obliging them to Work at an under-rate, or otherwise not to employ them; this is a Force upon Persons, whose Bread is to come by their Work, and therefore must be contented to take a little rather than Starve by standing Idle. But in this may be great Injustice, whilst their Works being Valued at a High Rate by such as employ them, these grow Rich by the Sweat of the Poor, without allowing them any Tolerable proportion of what is gain'd by their Labors.

Here must have place a like Oppression in Spiritual Affairs; as in a Case much practis'd, of those, who having Rich Benefices, put in Vicars to bear the whole Weight of the Duty, and scarce allow them what is sufficient for a decent Subsistence: For since whatever Donations have been made, or whatever Tenths are paid, are in Consideration of the Service, that is to be done the Flock, and for their Maintenance



nance and Encouragement, who serve it, the whole seems in Justice their Right, who Labor in performing all the Functions due to the Flock. Thus it was certainly intended by the Donors, and in the First Institution of Tithes, and it was never desir'd, these Pious Provisions should be made the support of Idle Church-men, or to raise their State, whilst others for a Poor allowance do their Work. This then must be set down as an Abuse, in perverting the Charities of Pious Christians. But if it be consider'd farther, that such Plentiful Benefices were at First design'd, that the Flock might be provided with Able Men, and that these might not only live decently themselves, but likewise have wherewith to give relief to those of the Parish whom they should find to be distress: This Consideration shews a double Injustice in the present Method; First, In their Committing the Flock to the Care of such, whose want of Experience, &c. makes them unfit for the Charge, and thus robbing them of that help, which they want, and is their due. Secondly, In either unprofitably Hoarding, or unprofitably Spending, what ought to be the Relief of those Poor, whose Pastors they are.

## S E C T. IX.

*In Governors, Overseers of Colledges, Hospitals, &c. in Trustees, Overseers of the Poor, Masters of Schools, Debtors, Masters of Families, Gentlemen of Estates.*

**H**ERE again may come in still other Injustices too much practis'd; as, First, In Masters, Governors, Overseers of Colledges, Hospitals, Alms-houses. For all these being plentifully founded, and the express Intention of the Founders and other Benefactors, being to provide for such, whose Circumstances answer the Conditions by them declar'd; all Governors, Overseers, &c. are bound in Justice, by their Place, to present or admit no others, but such as come nearest to the Conditions prescrib'd; and thus only can they satisfy their Trust, and answer the End of the Founders. As often then, as they are over-rul'd either by Private Interest, Affection, or other Considerations, in preferring Relations, Friends,

*&c.*

*&c.* to others, whose Circumstances come nearer the design of the Founder, they abuse his Charity, and act against Justice, and are False to the Trust they have undertaken.

Secondly, In all sorts of Trustees, Guardians, *&c.* For if these are wanting to their Trust, and let those, for whom they have undertaken it, be Sufferers thro their Neglect, in not examining, how things are manag'd, or not calling Stewards, *&c.* to an Account: Or if they make their own Advantage of the Trust, above what is due, by turning to their own use what belongs not to them, or by making very unreasonable Accounts, this is acting against Justice, and no Man of Integrity or Honesty can do it.

Thirdly, In Overseers of the Poor, Collectors and Church-wardens: For if these make undue Distributions, admitting such for Favor, into their number, who are not in want, or excluding others thro' Passion, who are in want: Or if they give in False Accounts, or turn to their own use what is given to the Poor, or Spend any part of it in Drink, Dinners, or Entertainments; they so far Rob the Poor, and can have no more Hopes of Mercy, without a  
Sincere

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Sincere Repentance, and making Restitution, than they who commit Robbery and Murther on the High-way; nay, they are in so much worse Condition, as God has undertaken the Cause of the Poor, and declar'd, that he will be the Revenger of those, that do them wrong.

Fourthly, In Masters of Schools, or others, who have the Care of Youth: For if these have either a settled Allowance, or are paid by the Parents of those, who are under their Charge, they are oblig'd in Justice, to take due Pains in teaching such Youth, and to be watchful in every particular, as far as they have undertaken, in order to their Education. And if they are either Slothful or Careless in teaching them, or for want of due Inspection, give them Opportunities of doing themselves Injury, by Idleness, or Ill conversation, they betray their Trust, and will have all those Mischiefs to answer for, which are the Consequence of their Neglect. And may not the Ruin of many Families, and Loss of many Souls, be a part of this?

Fifthly, In those, who having the Money of others in their Hands, Neglect to give them sufficient Security:  
For

For tho' those to whom it belongs, ought to press it, yet there are Circumstances, where Bashfulness, Dependance, Friendship, will not allow some. Tempers to be importune in the Case; and here for the Debtor to omit or delay the securing such Money, cannot be clear'd from Injustice, since 'tis hazarding another's Right, and may easily prove his Ruin. These Delays have often been follow'd with such Effects, that neither Justice nor Prudence can expose another's Right to such Uncertainties, as are those of Life.

Sixthly, In those, who neglect to make their last Will in time of Health, who have Matters of Justice, Provision for Younger Children, the Peace of Family, &c. depending on their Settlements. The Injustice of Delays in this Point is very evident, where Justice presses so strongly for it.

Seventhly, In all those, who unnecessarily Contract Debts, which may be never in their Power to pay; and in all those, who, being able, Neglect to satisfy Just Debts. The Reason of the former part is, because doing Justice ought not to be put to hazards without Necessity. And the Reason of the latter is, because paying Debts

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is a Point of Justice, and therefore ought to be satisfied. This is most pressing in Regard of those, who want their Money; and the greater the Inconveniencies are, which they Suffer for want of it, the greater is the Crime. 'Tis no less than Cruelty and Oppression, when the denial of Just Debts streightens Families, so as to want Necessaries for Managing their Trade, Educating their Children, and brings ruin upon them. 'Tis generally injurious to all, because there are few, but what are Sufferers for want of their Money; and sometimes those are the greatest, who seem least Importune in Demanding their own. At least their Inconveniencies are not to be disputed, who solicit for their due; and therefore, tho' it be no surprize, that Men of no Principles Contract Debts on all sides, and are not concern'd in paying; yet it is a matter of just wonder, that those, who seem serious in the Business of Salvation, and make a Scruple of being Unjust, should be so little Solicitous in Paying what they Owe, but let their Debts run on, with no more Reflection, than as if no Body were injur'd by their Debts unpaid, or that it was not their Duty to pay them. They seem

to

to think little of it, and so are at Rest within themselves; but to me their Case looks so very ill, by Reason of the many Injuries, they may do by their Neglect; that in my Opinion, 'tis much safer for them to consider it in time, than to run the hazard of the Injustice, which may be charg'd upon them.

Lastly, In many Masters of Families, and Gentlemen of Estates. For when I consider these, upon the Title of Justice, bound to provide for their Children and Family, I cannot but conclude, that the Neglect of this is doing contrary to Justice, contrary to that Duty, which God has laid upon them, and they by a virtual Contract, have undertaken. And what then must I say of Tradesmen or others, who live by their Industry, when thro' Sloth or Ill Company, they neglect their Business, and expose their Children, &c. to all the Mischiefs of Want? What of Gentlemen, who either thro' want of Care, or the Immoderate Expences of an Idle, Extravagant or Vicious Life, waste their Estates, and many ways Injure, if not wholly Ruin their Family? Can these think themselves Just, I do not say to God, but to Men, while they

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they Prodigally throw away their Estates, of which, according to the Christian Scheme, they are no more than Principal Stewards, and ought to manage for the good of their Posterity, to whom whilst they give a Being, they ought likewise to provide a Well-being? Can they think themselves Just, while to gratifie their Humors, their Vices and Idle Company, they are more Cruel to the Children of their own Bowels, than the worst of Enemies? I cannot tell what their Thoughts may be, tho' I fear they do not think; but to make a Judgment from the Infinite Mischiefs I have seen brought upon Generations by this unchristian Method, I think the Violence of Thieves and Murtherers may more likely find Mercy, than the Treachery of these Modish Parricides. And therefore, whatever their Profession be, to esteem them for Christians, is what I cannot do, without Violence to all the Principles I have learnt from Christ and his Gospel.

Infinite other Injustices there are, but from the Consideration of these Particulars, I think they may be easily discover'd by those, who are not resolv'd to smother all the Principles of Nature, Reason and Faith, which God has given them;



• them ; and therefore I conclude with this Request to all those, who are any ways engag'd in Money-concerns, that they would be watchful against all the Temptations of unjust Gain, and not lose their Souls for any Advantage that can be expected from over-reaching or defrauding their Neighbor ; but to be contented with the Fruit of Fair and Just dealing, hoping for the Blessing of God on it, and esteeming a Little with the Comfort of a Good Conscience, better than the Abundance of Fraud and Injustice ; for thus only can they Act as Christians.

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